

CONFIDENTIAL

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO.

25X1A

INTELFOAX

Approved For Release

2006/01/10 : CIA-RDP82-00457R005400150005-5

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

FLO
160

25X1 COUNTRY

Albania

DATE DISTR. 31 JUL 50

SUBJECT

Activity in the Ports of Durres and Vlone

NO. OF PAGES 1

25X1A

PLACE
ACQUIRED

NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)

25X1C

DATE OF
INFO.

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SUPPLEMENT TO
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1. Protection for foreign vessels sailing within the territorial waters of Albania is non-existent, especially such common safety devices as the establishment of safe channels for shipping. Coastal and deep-water vessels, to avoid danger, normally remain a minimum of three miles from the Albanian coast. In addition, in the Bay of Vlone, danger areas can be observed where anti-sulmarine nets have been laid. These nets can also be noted in the vicinity of the Island of Saseno, where there are large-caliber coastal artillery guns and military fortifications. The waters surrounding the Island of Saseno are believed to be mined.
2. During the period 25 to 29 April 1950, a large Soviet ship of approximately 8,000 tons docked in the port of Durres and unloaded a mixed cargo of sacked flour, canned goods, Indian corn, vegetables and large crates believed to contain weapons and war materiel. At the same time, a Polish ship of almost the same tonnage was also engaged in unloading crates of the same type discharged from the Soviet ship. It was anticipated that both these vessels, after unloading their cargo, would load chrome ore and bitumen tar. The Soviet vessel was to proceed to a Black Sea port, while the Polish ship was to go to a Baltic port, probably Gdynia. In addition, a Soviet and a Rumanian ship were expected momentarily at Durres with mixed cargoes.
3. The Italian tanker, ARCIONE, was engaged in loading a cargo of crude oil at Vlone to be carried for refining to the ROMSA Refinery in Fiume. This vessel was docked in the vicinity of the broad pier under construction at Vlone, where a modern piping system for the loading of crude oil has been placed in operation. Another Italian tanker in Vlone was expected to load crude oil destined for the Batum refinery in the USSR.
4. During this period a Soviet general and an entourage of Soviet and Albanian officers, riding in Soviet-type vehicles, inspected the port facilities and military fortifications at Durres and Vlone.

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Document No. 0105
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Declassified ☒
Class. Changed To: TS
Approved For Release 2006/01/10 : CIA-RDP82-00457R005400150005-5
Date: 21 JUN 1978

This document is hereby regraded to CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with the letter of 16 October 1978 from the Director of Central Intelligence to the Archivist of the United States.

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